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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/522,539	01/27/2005	Neil Bonnette Graham	KC-0128	8512
34610	7590	10/06/2006	EXAMINER	
FLESHNER & KIM, LLP P.O. BOX 221200 CHANTILLY, VA 20153			PALO, FRANCIS T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3644	

DATE MAILED: 10/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/522,539

Applicant(s)

GRAHAM ET AL.

Examiner

Francis T. Palo

Art Unit

3644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☒ Other: Restriction.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of **inventions**, which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, **applicant is required**, in reply to this action, **to elect a single invention** to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-21, drawn to a plant cultivation system (product).

Group II, claim(s) 22-26, drawn to methods (uses of product).

The inventions listed as **Groups I** and **II** do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: while the two groups are permitted combinations, there are multiple inventions in each category (Group), and only one invention is permitted in each Group.

Specifically:

Group-IA: A plant cultivation system placed close to the roots of plants growing in the **ground** (claims 1 and 2).

Group-IB: A plant cultivation system placed close to the roots of plants growing in **pots or containers**.

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Group-IIA: System placed **within a vessel** (apertured and not apertured) containing growth medium and a plant (claims 1 and 22).

Group-IIB: System placed **underneath an apertured vessel** containing growth medium and a plant (claims 1 and 25).

Group-IIC: System placed **on or under capillary matting in a container**, and a plant containing apertured vessel is also placed on the capillary matting (claims 1 and 26).

This application contains claims directed to more than one **species** of the generic invention.

These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows, and the claims are deemed to correspond to the species listed below in the following manner:

Groups IA or IB:

Species 90+: Bag material having an air water surface contact angle greater than 90° (claim-19);

Or,

Species 90-: Bag material having an air water surface contact angle less than 90° (claim-18).

Group-IIA:

Species-A: Apertured vessel (claims 1, 22, 24);

Or,

Species-NA: Non-apertured vessel (claims 1, 22, 23).

Group-IIC:

Species-OCM: On a capillary mat (claims 1 and 26);

Or,

Species-UCM: Under a capillary mat (claims 1 and 26).

Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to **elect a single species** to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable.

The reply must also **identify the claims readable on the elected species**, including any claims subsequently added.

An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141.

If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

The following claim(s) are generic: **claim-1 is generic.**

The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: see the group and species particulars outlined above, and FR-2406387 teaches the features of claim-1.

A telephone call was not made to applicants representative on 9/30/06 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, due to the complexity of the requirement.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) **an election of a species and invention** to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) **identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.**

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Francis T. Palo whose telephone number is 571-272-6907. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Tu., Th.-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teri Luu can be reached on 571-272-7045. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Francis T. Palo

Francis T. Palo
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3644